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**PLACER RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT AWARDED CAL FIRE GRANT TO FUND A FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES CAREER MENTORSHIP PROGRAM**

AUBURN, CA – CAL FIRE’s Wood Products and Bioenergy Team awarded the Placer County RCD a grant amounting to \$250,880 to fund a Forestry and Natural Resources Career Mentorship Program. This program, which has been piloted for two academic years at five educational institutions in California, seeks to increase entry and retention of early career professionals in the field of forestry through personalized, one-on-one mentorship. The program provides professional trainings (resume development, interview skills, etc.) and coordinates panels of career professionals to help students transition into the workforce. While the program serves all students and mentors with an interest, it was formed with the intent of helping students from traditionally underrepresented groups enter the field successfully and with tailored guidance. Growth of the program from 18 mentor pairs in 2020 to 58 mentor pairs in 2021 has illuminated the need for dedicated staff to meet the program’s goals and sustain its growth. Participating schools include UC Berkeley, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Cal Poly Humboldt, College of the Redwoods, and Shasta College.

Those interested in learning more about the program can contact Allison Erny ([allison@placerrcd.org](mailto:allison@placerrcd.org)).

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